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NOTES ON THE BIRDS PECULIAR TO LAYSAN ISLAND, HAWAIIAN GROUP. By WALTER K. FISHER. From 'The Auk' XX, pp. 384-397, plates XII-XVI, Oct. 1903.

The author discusses the habits of the land birds of Laysan Island, and to some extent their relationships. This paper is an amplification of certain notes published in 'Birds of Laysan, etc.,' with the addition of several photographs not appearing in that paper. The reproductions are much better, and demonstrate the mistake made by the publishers of the 'Birds of Laysan' in attempting a cheap means of reproducing an exceptionally valuable set of pictures.

It is indeed singular that such a small island as Laysan should possess three land birds besides a rail and a duck, all peculiar.—JOSEPH GRINNELL.

BIRDS OF THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS, CALIFORNIA: A PROBLEM IN DISTRIBUTION. By MALCOLM P. ANDERSON AND JOSEPH GRINNELL. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sciences, Philad., pp. 4-15, Apr. 17, 1903.

The Siskiyou mountains in northern California are interesting faunally because they are a wedge between the more or less 'arid' Sierras on the east and the excessively moist coast belt on the west. The first portion of the paper concerns itself with the physiography of the region, and a list of the principal forest trees is given, all of which are characteristic Sierran forms. The only peculiar tree to this range, *Picea breweriana*, seems to have been overlooked. The Transition, Canadian, and Hudsonian Zones are represented.

As would be expected *a priori*, the avifauna proves to be a mixture of the Humid Coast Fauna and the Arid Sierran, and the "list is a remarkable one as showing the association of a number of birds not unusually found together." Forty-three species are listed. *Vireo huttoni obscurus* is found to be untenable.

A LIST OF LAND BIRDS FROM CENTRAL WASHINGTON. By ROBERT E. SNODGRASS. From 'The Auk,' XX, pp. 202-209, April, 1903.

During the summer of 1902 Mr. Snodgrass conducted a biological collecting expedition to the interesting Grand Coulee country of Central Washington, and the ornithological results are embodied in the present paper. The Grand Coulee is the bed of an ancient and temporary short-cut for the Columbia river around the eastern face of the old glaciers which flowed southward and eastward from the mountains. It is a gorge fifty miles long, and from one to two miles wide cut down three hundred to five hundred feet into the basalt. The country in this region is for the most part very desolate, being given over to the cultivation of wheat, and "there is nothing left of Nature but the air and the dust of the road." Fifty-two species of land birds were listed, with brief annotations.

ON THE TERRESTRIAL VERTEBRATES OF PORTIONS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO AND WESTERN TEXAS. By WITMER STONE and JAMES A. G. REHN. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad. pp. 16-33, May 7, 1903.

Mr. Stone has given us a list of forty-one species of birds secured by Messrs. Rehn and Viereck in the Sacramento Mountain region of south central New Mexico, and the extreme western portion of Texas. Specimens of thirty-one of the species were taken, the other ten being admitted on field identification. The range of *Spizella atricularis* is extended eastward by the capture of a specimen at Dry Canyon, Otero Co., N. M.

DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW GENERA SPECIES AND SUBSPECIES OF AMERICAN BIRDS. By ROBERT RIDGWAY. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, XVI, 105-112, Sept. 30, 1903.

In this paper Mr. Ridgway publishes diagnoses of four new genera of swallows, and twenty new species and subspecies of North and Middle American birds. These new forms are included in Part III of "Birds of North and Middle America," "now mostly in print, the further printing and publication of which has been postponed until after June, 1904." Of interest to western bird students is *Budytes flavus alascensis* from Western Alaska; *Lanius ludovicianus mearnsi*, from San Clemente Island, Cal., and Santa Margarita Island, Lower California; *Baeolophus inornatus restrictus*, "vicinity of San Francisco Bay, Cal."; *Baeolophus inornatus murinus*, Southern California and northern Lower California; *Psaltiriparus minimus saturatus*, "vicinity of Puget Sound"; *Chamaea fasciata rufula*, "central coast district of California, in Marin, San Francisco and Santa Clara counties." Part III of Mr. Ridgway's great work will contain much of especial value to Californians and we greatly regret the unlooked for delay in its appearance. The cause, needless to say, is due to circumstances over which the author has no control.

THE NORTH AMERICAN FORMS OF *ASTRAGALINUS PSALTRIA* (SAY), By HARRY C. OBERHOLSER. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington XVI, 113-116, Sept. 30, 1903.

Mr. Oberholser has briefly reviewed the North American forms of *Astragalinus psaltria* of

authors, namely *A. p. psaltria*, *A. p. arizonæ* and *A. p. mexicanus*. He concludes that the last two are the same as *Astragalinus p. psaltria*. *Arizonæ*, from Fort Wingate, N. M. was based on the immature parti-colored plumage of *psaltria*, and *mexicanus* is nothing more than the fully perfected black-backed plumage of the same subspecies. All three of these so-called races have been found breeding together in Colorado. All adult males from Lower California, California, Nevada, Arizona and Utah "have the back olive green, apparently never assuming the black plumage of true *psaltria*." This form is described as *Astragalinus psaltria hesperophilus*, the type being taken from San Bernardino.

BIRDS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO MAN. By CLARENCE M. WEED and NED DEARBORN. 8 VO. 380 pages, and many full-page and text illustrations. T. B. Lippincott Co., Philad. 1903.

This excellent book is, as the title-page states, "A Manual of Economic Ornithology for the United States and Canada." It is written in an entertaining style, and is certainly a very valuable addition to the literature of economic ornithology. As a storehouse of facts for the lay-reader, as well as for the professional ornithologist, it will be warmly welcomed, and its mission of education is one to be highly commended. In such a short notice it is difficult to give an adequate idea of a book of this character, which necessarily deals with many details. We would therefore advise the reader to procure a copy, if he is interested in this important branch of ornithological study.

THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF BIRDS TO THE STATE. By FRANK M. CHAPMAN. State of New York Forest Fish and Game Commission, 4 to, pp. 1-66, 12 colored plates. Sept. 1903.

In this excellent paper Mr. Chapman has presented a treatise on the economic status of the more important land birds of New York state. But from the nature of the subject his remarks have a much wider application, and omitting certain species would apply very well to California. Of necessity much of the paper is compilation, but the author has exercised good judgment in the selection of extracts, and in the choice of his sources.

The paper opens with 'The Bird and the State,' followed by 'What the Bird Does for the State,' under which is considered, 'The Bird and the Forester,' 'The Bird and the Fruit-grower,' 'The Bird and the Farmer,' and 'The Bird and the Citizen.' Then follows 'What the State does for the Bird,' 'What the State Should Do for the Bird,' and 'The Facts in the Case.' The principal families of land birds are taken up in order, and the commoner or more important economic species are considered under each. Copious references are given to original sources, which makes the paper a most handy compendium of economic ornithology.

The twelve colored plates are by Mr. Louis Agassiz Fuertes, and are well reproduced. They represent twenty-four species, of the leading types, from hawks to thrushes. The plate representing the red-tailed and Cooper hawks is particularly fine, both in the pose of the birds and in coloring, and we are also much taken with that of the screech owl, representing the gray and rufous phases of this familiar bird.

NOTES ON THE ANATOMY OF GEOSPIZA, COCORNIS AND CETHIDIA. By ROBERT E. SNODGRASS. From 'The Auk,' XX, pp. 402-17, plates XVII-XX.

Mr. Snodgrass compares at some length the anatomy of *Geospiza*, *Cocornis* and *Certhidia*. *Certhidia* is usually considered as belonging to the Mniotiltidæ and *Geospiza* and *Cocornis* to the Fringillidæ, but "in all structural points *Cocornis* really resembles *Certhidia* more than it resembles *Geospiza*. To be sure, the adult males of *Cocornis* and most of the *Geospiza* species are almost plain black, while the adults of *Certhidia* are gray with admixtures of olive and brownish. Yet, in the shape of the bill and in the structure of the skull *Certhidia* and *Cocornis* are almost identical. On the other hand, the structural differences between *Cocornis* and *Geospiza* are slight—the slender-billed *Geospizæ* differ from *Cocornis* in the characters of the skull and skeleton of the bill scarcely more than *Cocornis* does from *Certhidia*. The difference is not nearly so great as that between the slender-billed forms of *Geospiza* itself. Hence, a study of these three genera, is suggestive of a possible derivation of *Geospiza* from *Cocornis* and of *Cocornis* from *Certhidia*. This however, would place *Geospiza* in the Mniotiltidæ!"

There is no objection to this, Mr. Snodgrass. Certain learned authorities group together into the family Drepanididæ birds as dissimilar as our redstart and cardinal grosbeak. Verily classification plays some queer pranks!—WALTER K. FISHER.